



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Governor of Michigan
Lansing, Michigan 48909

AUG 03 2010

Dear Governor Granholm:

A number of leaders from federally recognized tribes in Michigan have expressed concerns to the Department of the Interior regarding the proposed Kennecott Mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

I, Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, recently visited the Bay Mills Indian Community and Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in northern Michigan, where tribal leaders spoke about the potential impact of the proposed mine on the health, welfare, and safety of their citizens. A number of the tribal leaders also spoke about the potential impact of sulfide mining on the exercise of their treaty rights.

As you are aware, the United States shares a trust relationship with the 565 federally recognized tribes, and has an obligation to protect the rights reserved by tribes in numerous treaties.

On November 5, 2009, President Obama signed an Executive Memorandum acknowledging that, "failure to include the voices of tribal officials in formulating policy affecting their communities has all too often led to undesirable and, at times, devastating and tragic results." The Executive Memorandum requires Federal officials to adhere to Executive Order 13175, which requires Federal officials to consult with Indian tribes on policy decisions that have tribal implications. While the tribal-state relationship is fundamentally different than the tribal-federal relationship, the Department of the Interior strongly encourages states to live up to the spirit of the President's policy on tribal consultation.

We encourage you to work with the leaders of the 12 federally recognized tribes in Michigan to ensure that State regulatory efforts related to sulfide mining are undertaken with consideration for their impact on tribal communities and reserved treaty rights. We would be happy to assist in any tribal-state dialogue to ensure that efforts to mitigate the potential negative impact of sulfide mining on tribal communities are based in sound policy and science.

We thank you for your efforts, and for your commitment to working with tribal leaders on these very important issues.

Sincerely,

Larry Echo Hawk
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Anne J. Castle
Assistant Secretary – Water & Science

cc: Warren C. Swartz, Jr., President
Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

Jeffrey D. Parker, President
Bay Mills Indian Community

Kenneth Meshigaud, Chairperson
Hannahville Indian Community

James Williams, Jr., Chairperson
Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Darwin Joe McCoy, Chairperson
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Derek Bailey, Chairperson
Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians

David K. Sprague, Chairperson
Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians of Michigan (Gun Lake Tribe)

Larry Romanelli, Ogema
Little River Band of Ottawa Indians

Ken Harrington, Chairperson
Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Homer Mandoka, Chairperson
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

Matthew J. Wesaw, Chairperson
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

Dennis V. Kequom, Sr., Chief
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan